

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Gird Point Lookout

Other names/site number: 24RA0137

Name of related multiple property listing:

L-4 Fire Lookouts in the USFS Northern Region (Region 1), 1932-1967

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: _____

City or town: Hamilton State: Montana County: Ravalli

Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☒

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national X statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

 X A B X C D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government

Gird Point Lookout
Name of Property

Ravalli County, Montana
County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ removed from the National Register
☐ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private: ☐
Public – Local ☐
Public – State ☐
Public – Federal ☒

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s) ☒
District ☐
Site ☐
Structure ☐
Object ☐

Gird Point Lookout
Name of Property

Ravalli County, Montana
County and State

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u> </u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u>2</u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Government

Other: fire lookout

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic: hotel (USFS cabin rental)

Gird Point Lookout
Name of Property

Ravalli County, Montana
County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Other: "Readicut" L-4 Lookout House

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation: CONCRETE (tower footings)

Walls: WOOD / Weatherboard; GLASS

Roof: WOOD / Shingle

Other: WOOD / Log (tower)

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Gird Point Lookout is a 1931-patten L-4 Lookout House built atop a 10-foot high log tower. It is located at an elevation of 7702 feet above sea level, atop the topographical feature of the same name—the high point in a northeast to southwest-trending ridge system on the west slope of the Sapphire Mountains on the east side of the Bitterroot Valley. The lookout stands on a talus outcrop. On site vegetation is limited to low growing grasses and forbs. The slopes below the lookout once contained stands of subalpine fir, however, most of these were killed during the 1990 Gird Point wildfire. Improvements include the lookout tower and cab, an outhouse in poor condition, a communications pole, and a helipad.

Narrative Description

Gird Point Lookout (contributing building) Gird Point Lookout is a 14-foot by 14-foot wood frame lookout cab with a pyramidal roof built atop a 10-foot high, log tower. The tower and cab are aligned so that they sit at a 45 degree angle to the cardinal directions. Simple drop wood siding covers the lower portion of the exterior walls, and the roof is covered with sawn cedar shingles with metal ridge caps. A metal stove pipe extends above the southeast slope of the roof at its north end. The entry into the lookout house is located at the east end of the southwest-facing wall. A modern wood board-and-batten door has replaced the original multi-light door. Four nine-light windows are located in the wall west of the entry. The remaining three walls each contain five, nine-light, wood windows, two of which slide sideways allowing ventilation. Several of the window panes are missing—the holes covered with cardboard. Each

Gird Point Lookout

Ravalli County, Montana

Name of Property

County and State

of the lookout cab's four walls has two top-hinged shutters; when open, the shutter struts are affixed to the bottom rail of the catwalk railing. The building retains its lightning protection.

The four log legs of the cross-braced log tower are supported by cast-in-place battered concrete footings. A single-flight stairway is located on the southeast side of the lookout tower. The base of the stairway rests on a concrete footing etched with: "Aug. 18 1939." The stair stringers and treads are made with dimensional lumber. A safety railing on the outside edge of the stairway has been fashioned by attaching hog wire to a dimensional lumber hand rail which in turn is attached to two vertical wood posts. A small wooden storage box is suspended from the base of the cab adjacent to the inside edge of the stair. Originally, the box could be accessed by someone standing on the stair, however, access is now blocked by wire mesh attached to the inside edge of the stair. At the top of the stairway, a trapdoor leads to the catwalk that surrounds the cab. A spring-loaded safety gate is located the north edge of the trap-door opening.

In the one-room interior, the original maple floor is intact and in fair condition. The interior is fitted with a plywood platform bed frame, a metal stand with an Osborne fire-finder, a small wood heating stove, a small table, and a storage bench.

Outhouse (contributing building) The outhouse is located roughly 120 feet northeast of the lookout. It is a one-story frame building with a steep shed-style roof. The exterior walls are enclosed with vertical boards. At the time of the survey the outhouse was in poor condition. The roof is missing and the original, Z-braced, vertical board door lay on the ground. The Forest Service intends to replace the outhouse in the near future.

Helipad (noncontributing structure) A small helipad is located about 25 feet east of the lookout. It consists of a 10-foot by 12-foot leveled area within a natural talus outcrop that has been paved with concrete blocks.

Communications pole (noncontributing structure) A recently-erected peeled log pole, presumably to support communications antennae, is located about 40 feet northeast of the lookout.

Integrity

Gird Point Lookout retains all seven aspects of historical integrity. The lookout is in its original location, in a remote area accessible by both two-track road and by pedestrian trail. Its remoteness in turn contributes to its exceptional integrity of setting, feeling, and association. The lookout building and tower retain integrity of materials, workmanship and design. Although the log tower legs were replaced during a restoration in 2003, the replacements were in kind; the catwalk was also rebuilt and the roof resingled at this time. The lookout stands as an exceptional example of the once-common 1931-pattern L-4 Lookouts once included in the Bitterroot National Forest's fire detection system. A flagpole, present in 1982, has been removed from the site.

Gird Point Lookout
Name of Property

Ravalli County, Montana
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ B. Removed from its original location
- ☐ C. A birthplace or grave
- ☐ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ F. A commemorative property
- ☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Politics / Government

Conservation

Engineering

Architecture

Gird Point Lookout

Name of Property

Ravalli County, Montana

County and State

Period of Significance

1937- 1967

Significant Dates

1939 (year built)

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Clyde Fickes (designer)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Gird Point Lookout is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A and C, at the local and state level of significance. Under Criterion A, it is significantly associated with the US Forest Service's early fire detection program, which relied on a series of fixed lookout points from which to locate forest fires. Under Criterion C, Gird Point Lookout is an excellent example of a 1931-pattern L-4 Lookout House.

Gird Point Lookout meets the Registration Requirements set forth in the *L-4 Fire Lookouts in the USFS Northern Region (Region 1)*, *1932-1967 Multiple Property Document* and the associated contexts *The Role of the L-4 Lookout House in the Development of the US Forest Service Region 1's Fire Detection System*, and *L-4 Lookouts on the Bitterroot National Forest*. The period of significance for the Gird Point Lookout is 1937-1967, within the defined period of significance of the MPD cover form, 1932-1967. The Bitterroot National Forest added Gird Point Lookout to its fixed point fire detection system in 1939, the start of the lookout's period of significance, and used it through 1967, the end of the historical period as defined in the MPD cover form. It is currently used as a cabin rental.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The Bitterroot National Forest identified Gird Point as a lookout site sometime prior to 1933, when it appeared on a base map for the forest, along with five other lookout sites in the Darby District. The

Gird Point Lookout

Ravalli County, Montana

Name of Property

County and State

others included: Skalkaho Mountain, Bald Top, Black Bear Point, and Deer Mountain (all located in the Sapphire Mountains on the east side of the Bitterroot Valley) and Ward Mountain located in the Bitterroot Mountains on the west side of the valley.¹ Gird Point was rated as an “average season” lookout. In 1937, Elers Koch identified seven lookout points on the Darby District, none of which had been improved to current standards.²

Gird Point received its first and only major improvements in 1939. Like Medicine Point Lookout on the Sula District to the south, Gird Point is believed to have been built with Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) labor—probably under the direction of an experienced carpenter. The two lookouts both have dates inscribed in the concrete footings at the base of the single-flight stairs, indicating that Gird Point was under construction on August 18, of 1929, and that Medicine Point was being built in September of 1929.

During the region’s lookout replacement program of the 1950s, Gird Point was one of the structures inspected for possible replacement. At the time, it was classified as an “overload, temp” lookout, i.e., one manned only during extreme fire seasons. The inspector noted that while the lookout cab needed new beds and cabinets, with proper maintenance, the structure had an estimated “20 years of safe life.”³ In 1967, Gird Point was listed as one of sixteen lookouts manned on the Bitterroot National Forest. Two other Darby District lookouts, Ward Mountain and Deer Mountain, also were manned that year.⁴ By 1992, the Bitterroot manned only ten lookouts, and Gird Point was not among them. The only Darby District lookout used during that year was Deer Mountain, which by that time had been improved with a frame and concrete, flat-topped lookout built in 1960.⁵

After being abandoned for nearly two decades, the forest began restoration of Gird Point Lookout in 2003.⁶ During the restoration, the log tower legs were replaced in kind and the catwalk rebuilt. A new wood shingle roof was installed and the exterior of the building painted. The project took three years to complete, and in 2003 Gird Point Lookout was added to the forest’s cabin rental program.

¹ 1933 Bitterroot National Forest Map, with handwritten notations for 1936 season. Folder: F-Plans Presuppression Permanent 1930-1947, Box 21, RG 95, Records of the Bitterroot National Forest, Forest Supervisors Records, Alpha Files, E- Improvements, National Archives and Records Administration, Seattle (Hereinafter NARA Seattle).

² Elers Koch, Assistant Regional Forester, “August 19, 1937 Memorandum for Supervisor and Regional Office D (s) Supervision – Bitterroot Inspection.” Folder Bitterroot National Forest Inspection Reports, 1938-1935, 1 of 3, Box 2 Bitterroot – Cabinet, RG 95 Regional Office Inspection Reports 1906-1938, NARA, Seattle. Note that Ray Kresek indicates that Deer Mountain had a log cupola lookout built in 1928, Bald Top had an L-4 lookout built in 1931, and Ward Mountain had a L-4 look out on a pole tower built in 1934. The others only had tent camps. Ray Kresek *Fire Lookouts of the Pacific Northwest*, Fairfield, Washington, Ye Galleon Press, 1984.

³ Inspection report for Gird Point Lookout, dated November 15, 1955. Folder: E Improvements – Bitterroot 1957 Lookout Replacement, Box 6, RG 95 Records of the Forest Service Bitterroot National Forest, Forest Supervisor’s Files Alpha Files E-Improvements, NARA Seattle.

⁴ List of Fire Lookouts (manned) in 1967. Folder: 5100 Lookouts Historical 2 of 2, Box 45, RG 95 Records of the Forest Service Region 1, Missoula, Montana Historical Collection 1903-1990, NARA Seattle.

⁵ Press release dated Feb. 1992 “Seventy-Two Lookouts to be Operated This Summer Down from 800 Used in 1938,” Folder: Historical: Lookouts, Box 46, RG95 Historical Collection, NARA Seattle; Kresek *Fire Lookouts of the Pacific Northwest*, 1984, p. 388.

⁶ Rod Daniel “Room with a view – After extensive rehab, Gird Point Lookout opens for visitors,” *Ravalli Republic*, June 26. 2003.

Gird Point Lookout
Name of Property

Ravalli County, Montana
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Kresek, Ray
1984 *Fire Lookouts of the Northwest*. Fairfield Washington: Ye Galleon Press.

RG 95 Records of the US Forest Service, National Archives and Records Administration, Seattle, Washington.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
 - ☐ Other State agency
 - ☒ Federal agency
 - ☐ Local government
 - ☐ University
 - ☒ Other
- Name of repository: National Archives & Records Administration, Seattle, WA

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 24RA0137

Gird Point Lookout
Name of Property

Ravalli County, Montana
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 46.207467 Longitude: -113.911537

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☒ NAD 1983

1. Zone: 12 Easting: 0275401 m Northing: 5121220 m

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary of this property is an arbitrary line drawn to encompass the top of the rocky knob containing the lookout and associated resources.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary encloses the primary improvements at this location, namely the lookout house and tower and the ruins of the outhouse.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Janene Caywood

organization: CRCS

street & number: 1002 South 6th St. West

city or town: Missoula state: MT zip code: 59801

e-mail: crcs@montana.com

telephone: 406 728-9190

date: December 12, 2017

Gird Point Lookout

Name of Property

Ravalli County, Montana

County and State

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

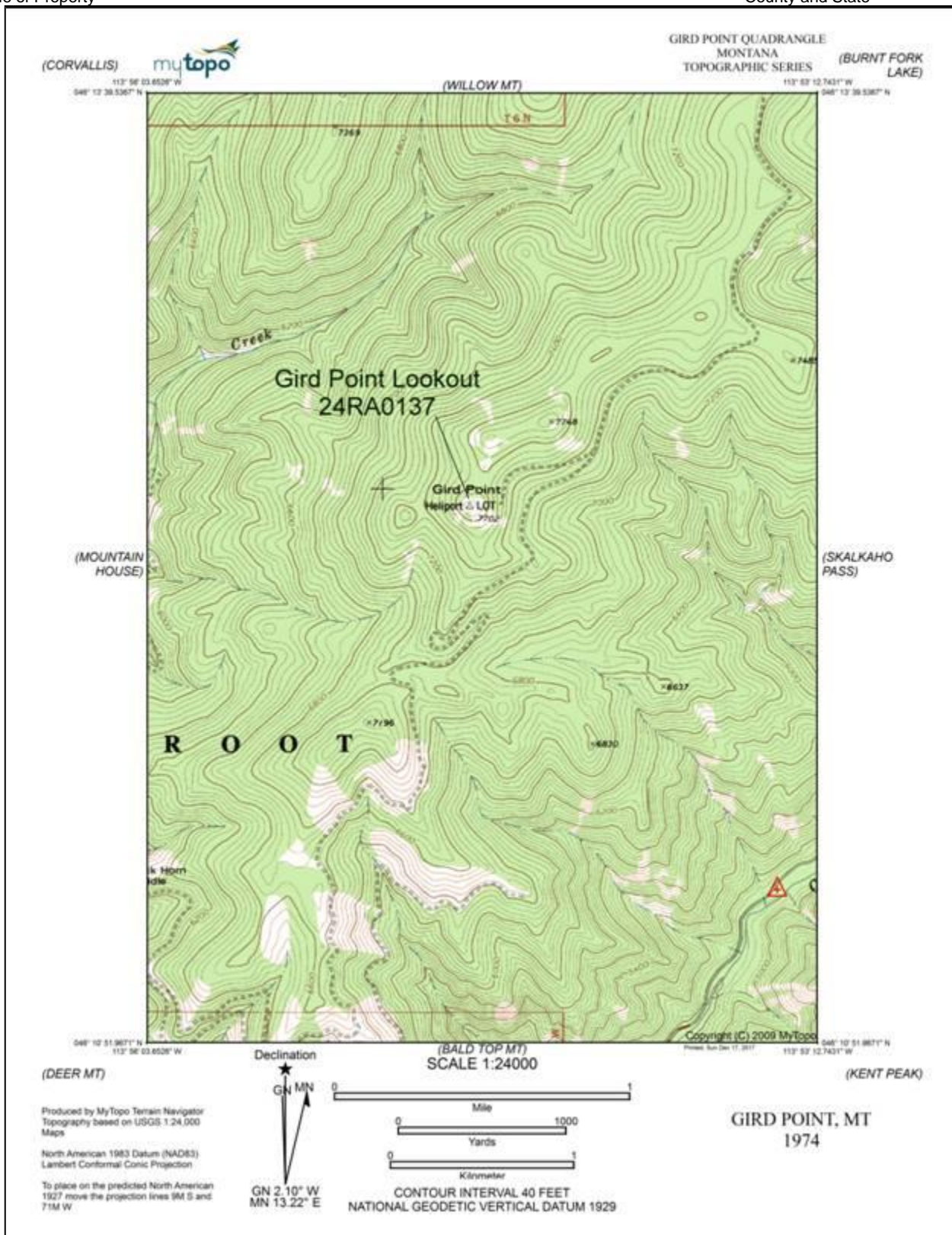
- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Gird Point Lookout

Name of Property

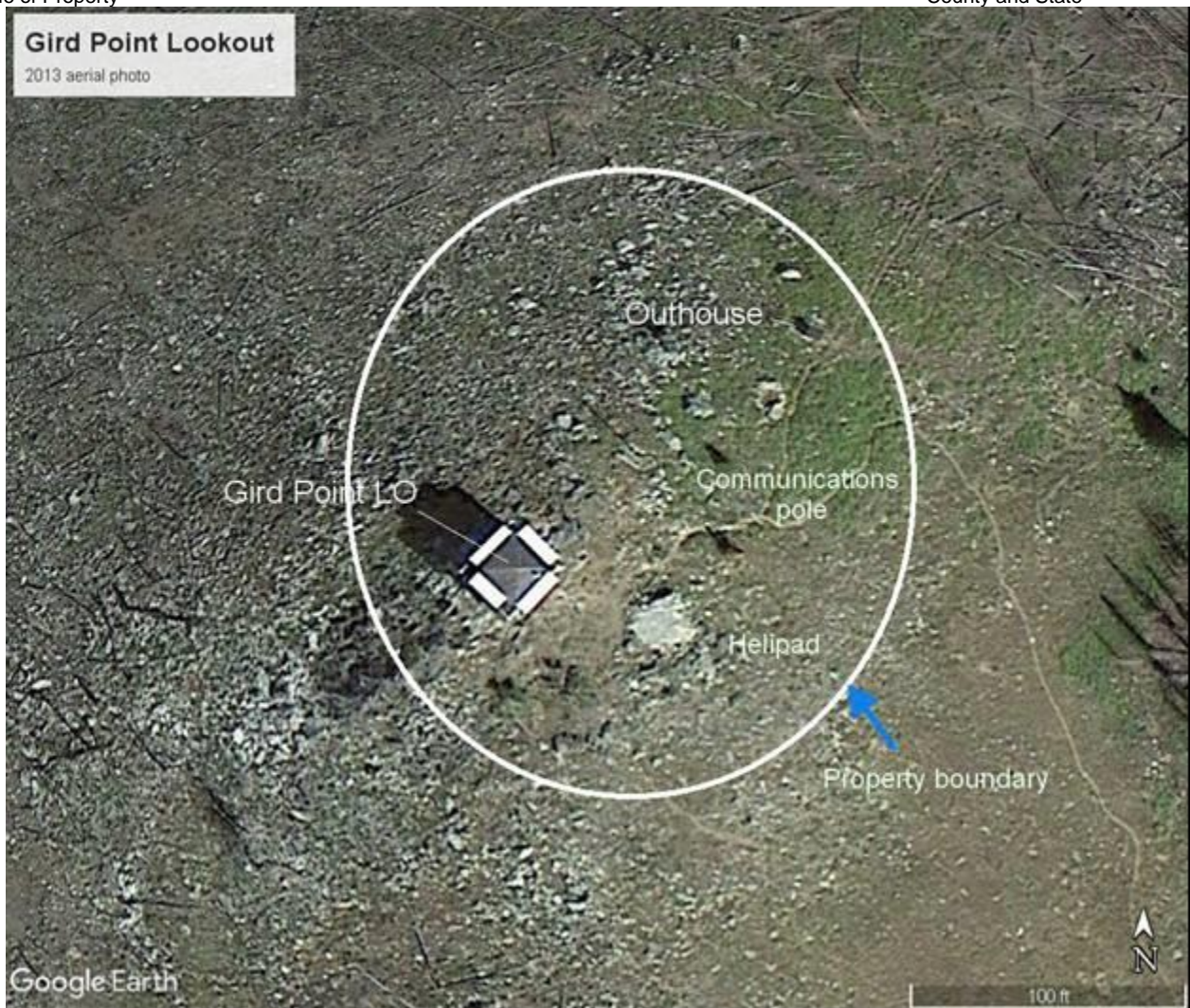
Ravalli County, Montana

County and State



Gird Point Lookout
Name of Property

Ravalli County, Montana
County and State



Gird Point Lookout site plan, 2013 aerial photo.

Gird Point Lookout

Name of Property

Ravalli County, Montana

County and State

National Register Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600 x 1200 pixels (minimum), 3000 x 2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

All Photographs

Name of Property: Gird Point Lookout

City or Vicinity: Hamilton Vicinity

County: Ravalli

State: Montana

Photographer: Janene Caywood

Date Photographed: September 13, 2017

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of ____.

See Below

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Gird Point Lookout

Name of Property

Ravalli County, Montana

County and State



MT_RavalliCounty_GirdPointLookout_0001. Looking north to the southwest (front) and southeast sides of Gird Point Lookout.

Gird Point Lookout

Name of Property

Ravalli County, Montana

County and State



MT_RavalliCounty_GirdPointLookout_0002. Looking southwest to the northeast wall of the lookout.

Gird Point Lookout

Name of Property

Ravalli County, Montana

County and State



MT_RavalliCounty_GirdPointLookout_0003. Looking southeast at the northwest wall of the lookout.

Gird Point Lookout

Name of Property

Ravalli County, Montana

County and State



MT_RavalliCounty_GirdPointLookout_0004. Detail of the concrete footing for the stair etched with "Aug. 18 1939."

Gird Point Lookout

Name of Property

Ravalli County, Montana

County and State



MT_RavalliCounty_GirdPointLookout_0005. Wood storage box suspended from the base of the lookout.

Gird Point Lookout
Name of Property

Ravalli County, Montana
County and State



MT_RavalliCounty_GirdPointLookout_0006. Looking northeast to the spring-loaded safety gate at the edge of the trap door in the northeast side of the catwalk.

Gird Point Lookout

Name of Property

Ravalli County, Montana

County and State



MT_RavalliCounty_GirdPointLookout_0007. Interior, showing table and shelves.

Gird Point Lookout

Name of Property

Ravalli County, Montana

County and State



MT_RavalliCounty_GirdPointLookout_0008. Interior showing platform bed frames and fire-finder stand.

Gird Point Lookout
Name of Property

Ravalli County, Montana
County and State



MT_RavalliCounty_GirdPointLookout_0009. Interior: wood stove.

Gird Point Lookout
Name of Property

Ravalli County, Montana
County and State



MT_RavalliCounty_GirdPointLookout_0010. Looking west to the south and east sides of the outhouse.

Gird Point Lookout

Name of Property

Ravalli County, Montana

County and State



MT_RavalliCounty_GirdPointLookout_0011. Looking northeast to the communications pole.

Gird Point Lookout

Name of Property

Ravalli County, Montana

County and State



MT_RavalliCounty_GirdPointLookout_0012. Looking southeast over the helipad.